OG - 400-100

Incident Management Guidelines

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 The Abington Township Fire Department has adopted the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and shall use an Incident Management System on all incidents, events, and training evolutions.

2.0 Definitions

2.1 <u>**Area Command (Unified Area Command)**</u>: An organization established to oversee the management of (1) multiple incidents that are each being handled by an ICS organization, or (2) large or multiple incidents to which several Incident Management Teams have been assigned. Area Command has the responsibility to set overall strategy and priorities, allocate critical resources according to priorities, ensure that incidents are properly managed, and ensure that objectives are met and strategies followed. Area Command becomes Unified Area Command when incidents are multijurisdictional. Area Command may be established at an emergency operations center facility or at some location other than an Incident Command Post.

2.2 <u>**Chain of Command**</u>: A series of management positions in order of authority.

2.3 <u>**Clear Text**</u>: The use of plain English in radio communications transmissions. No Ten Codes or agency-specific codes are used when utilizing clear text.

2.4 <u>**Command**</u>: The act of directing and/or controlling resources by virtue of explicit legal, agency, or delegated authority. May also refer to the Incident Commander.

2.5 <u>**Command Staff**</u>: The Command Staff consists of the Public Information Officer, Safety Officer, and Liaison Officer. They report directly to the Incident Commander. They may have an Assistant or Assistants, as needed.

2.6 <u>**Division**</u>: Divisions are used to divide an incident into geographical areas of operation. A Division is located within the ICS organization between the Branch and the Task Force/Strike Team. (See Group.) Divisions are identified by alphabetic characters for horizontal applications and, often, by floor numbers when used in buildings.

2.7 <u>**Finance/Administration Section**</u>: The Section responsible for all incident costs and financial considerations. Includes the Time Unit, Procurement Unit, Compensation/Claims Unit, and Cost Unit.

2.8 <u>**General Staff**</u>: A group of incident management personnel organized according to function and reporting to the Incident Commander. The General Staff normally consists of the Operations Section Chief, Planning Section Chief, Logistics Section Chief, and Finance/Administration Section Chief.

2.9 <u>**Group**</u>: Groups are established to divide the incident into functional areas of operation. Groups are composed of resources assembled to perform a special function not necessarily within a single geographic division. (See Division.) Groups are located between Branches (when activated) and Resources in the Operations Section.

2.10 <u>**Incident Action Plan (IAP):**</u> An oral or written plan containing general objectives reflecting the overall strategy for managing an incident. It may include the identification of operational resources and

assignments. It may also include attachments that provide direction and important information for management of the incident during one or more operational periods.

2.11   **Incident Commander (IC):** The individual responsible for all incident activities, including the development of strategies and tactics and the ordering and the release of resources. The IC has overall authority and responsibility for conducting incident operations and is responsible for the management of all incident operations at the incident site.

2.12   **Incident Command Post (ICP):** The field location at which the primary tactical-level, on-scene incident command functions are performed. The ICP may be collocated with the incident base or other incident facilities and is normally identified by a green rotating or flashing light.

2.13   **Incident Command System (ICS):** A standardized on-scene emergency management construct specifically designed to provide for the adoption of an integrated organizational structure that reflects the complexity and demands of single or multiple incidents, without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries. ICS is the combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure, designed to aid in the management of resources during incidents. It is used for all kinds of emergencies and is applicable to small as well as large and complex incidents. ICS is used by various jurisdictions and functional agencies, both public and private, to organize field-level incident management operations.

2.14   **Liaison Officer (LNO):** A member of the Command Staff responsible for coordinating with representatives from cooperating and assisting agencies. The Liaison Officer may have Assistants.

2.15   **Logistics:** Providing resources and other services to support incident management.

2.16   **Logistics Section:** The Section responsible for providing facilities, services, and materials for the incident.

2.17   **National Incident Management System (NIMS):** A system mandated by HSPD-5 that provides a consistent nationwide approach for Federal, State, local, and tribal governments; the private sector; and nongovernmental organizations to work effectively and efficiently together to prepare for, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity. To provide for interoperability and compatibility among Federal, State, local, and tribal capabilities, the NIMS includes a core set of concepts, principles, and terminology. HSPD-5 identifies these as the ICS; multiagency coordination systems; training; identification and management of resources (including systems for classifying types of resources); qualification and certification; and the collection, tracking, and reporting of incident information and incident resources.

2.18   **Officer:** The ICS title for the personnel responsible for the Command Staff positions of Safety, Liaison, and Public Information.

2.19   **Operational Period:** The period of time scheduled for execution of a given set of operation actions as specified in the Incident Action Plan. Operational Periods can be of various lengths, although usually not over 24 hours.

2.20   **Operations Section:** The Section responsible for all tactical operations at the incident. Includes Branches, Divisions and/or Groups, Task Forces, Strike Teams, Single Resources, and Staging Areas.

2.21   **Planning Section**: Responsible for the collection, evaluation, and dissemination of information related to the incident, and for the preparation and documentation of Incident Action Plans. The Section also maintains information on the current and forecasted situation, and on the status of resources assigned to the incident. Includes the Situation, Resources, Documentation, and Demobilization Units, as well as Technical Specialists.

2.22   **Public Information Officer (PIO):** A member of the Command Staff responsible for interfacing with the public and media or with other agencies with incident-related information requirements.

2.23   **Safety Officer:** A member of the Command Staff responsible for monitoring and assessing safety hazards or unsafe situations, and for developing measures for ensuring personnel safety. The Safety Officer may have Assistants.

2.24 **Section**: The organizational level having responsibility for a major functional area of incident management, e.g., Operations, Planning, Logistics, Finance/Administration, and Intelligence (if established). The section is organizationally situated between the Branch and the Incident Command.

2.25 **Single Resource**: An individual, a piece of equipment and its personnel complement, or a crew or team of individuals with an identified work Supervisor that can be used on an incident.

2.26 Span of Control: The number of individuals a supervisor is responsible for, usually expressed as the ratio of supervisors to individuals. (Under the NIMS, an appropriate span of control is between 1:3 and 1:7.)

2.27 **Staging Area**: Location established where resources can be placed while awaiting a tactical assignment. The Operations Section manages Staging Areas.

2.28 **Standard Operating Procedure (SOP):** Complete reference document or an operations manual that provides the purpose, authorities, duration, and details for the preferred method of performing a single function or a number of interrelated functions in a uniform manner.

2.29 **Strike Team:** A specified combination of the same kind and type of resources with common communications and a Leader.

2.30 **Tactics:** Deploying and directing resources on an incident to accomplish incident strategy and objectives.

2.31 **Task Force:** A combination of single resources assembled for a particular tactical need with common communications and a Leader.

2.32 **Unified Command:** An application of ICS used when there is more than one agency with incident jurisdiction or when incidents cross political jurisdictions. Agencies work together through the designated members of the Unified Command, often the senior person from agencies and/or disciplines participating in the Unified Command, to establish a common set of objectives and strategies and a single Incident Action Plan.

2.33 **Unit**: The organizational element having functional responsibility for a specific incident Planning, Logistics, or Finance/Administration activity.

2.34 **Unity of Command:** The concept by which each person within an organization reports to one and only one designated person. The purpose of unity of command is to ensure unity of effort under one responsible commander for every objective.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITY

The responsibility to ensure that the above actions are taken in an appropriate manner is defined as indicated below:

3.1 Company Members (CM)
3.2 Company Officers (CO)

4.0 PROCEDURE

4.1 Command shall be established with the highest ranking officer of the district assuming the position of Incident Commander.

    4.1.1 In the absence of a fire officer for the district, the highest ranking Abington Township Fire Department officer shall assume this position.

    4.1.2 Command is established with the first arriving unit and transferred as higher ranking officers arrive.

4.2 Establishing of command with the County EDS shall be any incident involving multiple companies in service for an extended period of time. An example would be when handlines are in service.

4.2.1 Command shall be established as the Street or Building, using the address if additional incidents are occurring on the same street. An example would be, "County from Chief 300, establishing Keswick Avenue Command." See Radio Procedures for additional information.

4.3 The initial arriving unit shall, in accordance with the radio procedures of the County of Montgomery, provide a report indicating conditions and geographic location.

4.3.1 The sides of the building shall be identified as A, B, C, and D.

4.3.1.1 "A" side shall be the address side of the building whenever feasible.

4.3.1.2 "B" side shall be the next side in a clockwise rotation.

4.3.1.3 "C" side shall be the next side in a clockwise rotation.

4.3.1.4 "D" side shall be the next side in a clockwise rotation

4.4 Geographic references shall be made according to local landmarks and roadways. An example would be "York Road" side of the building and/or "Bryner" side of the building.

4.5 The Incident Commander shall decide and announce the operational mode as: Stand-by, Offensive, or Defensive.

4.6 The Incident Commander shall identify and announce the location of an Incident Command Post.

4.6.1 The command post shall be located outside the collapse zone and in the Cold Zone.

4.7 The Incident Commander, in accordance with the radio procedures of the County of Montgomery, shall provide progress reports as necessary.

4.8 The Incident Commander shall assume all general and command staff positions until the operations dictate otherwise or span of control is exceeded by number of personnel supervised or number of tasks required to manage the incident.

4.8.1 Whenever possible, a Safety Officer shall be appointed.

4.9 Most incidents will require use of a simple management system of the incident commander, safety officer (if available), and groups.

4.9.1 Example- Car Fire: Incident Commander, Safety Officer, Suppression Group, and Overhaul Group.

4.9.2 Example- Room and Contents Fire: Incident Commander, Safety Officer, 1st Floor, 2nd Floor (if necessary/based on number of floors), Roof, RIT, Water Supply, etc.

4.10 More complex incidents involving multiple crews and/or larger buildings may require appointment of an Operations Chief and/or Branch Officers. Types of incidents would include a hazardous materials release, high rise, hospital, mall, etc.

4.11 All attempts shall be made to maintain crew integrity when making assignments.

4.11.1 Officers with the crews assigned to a task shall be responsible for their crew.

4.11.2 An officer assigned to the geographic area (i.e.: 1st Floor) shall be responsible for all crews on that floor so long as the number of crews supervised does not exceed the span of control.

4.11.2.1 Example: Engine 500's crew is assigned to the first floor of a building for suppression activity. They are the first crew assigned to the area and are under the direction of Lieutenant 500. Lieutenant 500 shall assume responsibility for the 1st floor and shall direct incoming (intact) crews that are also under the direction of an officer. Lieutenant 500 would respond to the Incident Commander as "1st Floor" and would supervise activity so long as the number of personnel he is directly responsible for does not exceed seven (7). In this example, he would be responsible for his initial crew (Engine 500) and the officers supervising the other crews (ventilation, search/rescue, back-up line).

4.12 The Incident Commander shall develop an Incident Action Plan that is shared with the responders. In most cases this will be verbal; however, in longer events this will be written.

4.13 A process for accountability shall be established at all incidents with the scope dictated by complexity of the incident.

    4.13.1 A personnel accountability report shall be conducted at each 20 minute period, change of operational mode, building collapse, and/or mayday announcement. Officers assigned a crew shall be responsible for reporting PAR to the Incident Commander, upon request.

4.14 Rehabilitation shall be established at all incidents requiring personnel to be in service for an extended period of time and as identified in the Rehabilitation Policy.

    4.14.1 Basic rehabilitation can be provided at the company level, with extensive rehabilitation being provided by Emergency Medical Services.